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ABSTRACT

Second language instruction in the U.S. and Europe is in difficulties. The choice of a second language is artibrary and the motivation lubious. In Europe and now also in the U.S., attention has turned to the planned interlanguage Esperanto, which offers a maximally regularized structure, is considered "easy" by learners, and has the motivational factor of politicoethnic neutrality. Bernsteinian educational reformers in Germany have suggested the adoption of Esperanto, which appears only to have an elaborated code, to help extend the linguistic repertoire of pupils whose native German is largely the elaborated code. The morphology, syntax and especially orthography of Esperanto are also a more useful introduction to general language principles than the complex, aberrant, atypical English and French. Recent and current experiments in Europe and proposed experiments in the U.S. are described here. The subject is of significance for second language acquisition theory, learning motivation, and language pedagogy. (Author/KM)

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Teaching the Interlanguage: Some Experiments*

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In a recent article, Oppenheimer has pointed out two weaknesses that have characterized American foreign language education: firstly, a general failure to help students attain the target skill of oral fluency, with all of its psychological and practical rewards and satisfactions; and secondly, a history of drastic changes of a faddish or willful nature in the choice made by American students of which foreign language to take or whether to take one at all.[1]

In these circumstances it is understandable that an agonizing reappraisal of the state of American FL teaching at all levels is taking place. The rethinking of FL education has perhaps achieved most in the field of methodology, where old and new received verities have been tested and questioned; less in the examination of the place of a second language in the broader curriculum; and least of all in the matter of rationalizing the choice of a target language.

The present article speaks specifically to the latter issue, and makes a specific proposal. At the same time, it may pose some questions of relevance to the other moot points, those of second-language methodology and of the curricular purpose and general educational role of instruction in a language other than the student's own. The proposal may suggest, to open-minded and innovative language teachers, administrators and other educators, a new and creative approach to the sad fact that, at present, an increasing majority of our students do not receive an insight into a linguistic structure other than their native English. The suggestions made may appeal to those who are seeking an innovative response in the language field to the "creeping return" to subject requirements for general undergraduate degrees, caused in part by changed socio-economic conditions and changes in the philosophy and practice of education. This return has recently benefited English, history, mathematics, etc., but, for reasons which deserve careful consideration, only to a much lesser extent foreign languages as they have hitherto been known and taught in the American educational system.

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The proposal here made represents a novel and, in the United States and Canada, still little tried approach - the introduction to students of a language other than their own, yet not one which is by definition "foreign." It is not foreign in the sense that it is the first language, the native language of a foreign people or even of an antipathetic or hostile foreign power, nor - as Wallace Lambert controversially claims - perhaps just as damningly for some Anglo-American students - the language of poor, menial immigrants and minority groups in the United States.[2]

As in the U.S., language teaching in Europe has recently faced

shortfalls in performance, in student interest, and declining enrollments and skills in the traditionally dominant FL's, especially English in North-West continental Europe and Russian in Eastern Europe. American language teachers, who may have envied their European colleagues, knowing of the many years of FL courses offered in most European schools and being personally aware of instances of polyglot achievement among Europeans, may not realize that the FL profession in Europe, especially in the most sociologically rationalized and modernized nations such as Sweden, the Netherlands and the German Federal Republic, is, like its American counterpart, in difficulties and that its achievements have been put in question by empirical studies. One such, by Professor Kurt Otten in West Germany, notes "that the introduction of audio-lingual techniques in German schools leaves no more than 10-15% of the Abiturienten studying English in Marburg able to follow a slowly and carefully spoken presentation in English." In reporting this, Professor Jeffrey L. Sammons of Yale observes concerning North American language teachers that "we might cease discouraging ourselves with the myth that most educated Europeans are multilingual."[3] The situation regarding the practical mastery of Russian in most countries of Eastern Europe, even in Bulgaria with its closely cognate language, is equally dismal, for political and psychological reasons as well as reasons of poor teacher training, which lie beyond the scope of this report but which invite comparison with second-language attitudes, especially to English, in the West.

Political and cultural factors have also been involved in the debate on a language policy for the European Economic Community and for Eastern Europe in the face of liberalization in Hungary, an independent foreign policy in Rumania, increased trade with the West and lessened dependence upon the USSR. Linguistic needs and the competing claims of different FL's are becoming more pressing all the time.[4]

Experiments in Europe

A group of linguistic cyberneticists and specialists in computer-assisted education, associated with the West German Gesellschaft für Programmierte Instruktion (GPI), and particularly its Arbeitsgruppe 13 - Interlinguistik und Sprachkybernetik (ILUS), recently turned its attention to the planned, politically neutral interlanguage (IL) Esperanto as a linguistic propedeutic (i.e. an introduction to further language study and test mechanism of linguistic ability), as a test language for computer-assisted and programmed language teaching, and as a new approach to the competing curricular demands in the European classroom both of new, non-language subjects and of several FL's.

In this connection it is not coincidental that the first experimental teaching project to be discussed here was carried out in an East-Central-South European area where several languages of wider communication (French, English, Russian, German, Italian) are of approximately equal geolinguistic importance and where the choice of a first foreign language is (unlike that, say, in French Canada or Kazakhstan) a problematical or arbitrary one.

The attention of these German scientists and educators to Esperanto is an interesting return into official and scholarly attention for a language which, considered by Hitler part of a Jewish cosmopolitan conspiracy and denounced as such in his Mein Kampf, was forbidden in Germany in 1936 and equally oppressed in the Soviet Union, for similar grounds of "cosmopolitanism," with similar anti-Semitic overtones, under Stalinism, 1935-1956.[5]

It may in passing be observed that the situation as regards FL choice in the United States is a similarly problematical one. No one language is of obviously greater geolinguistic or practical importance than another. Rather, each has a variety of positive and negative factors. This may be one of the deeper reasons underlying the history of faddish or willful choices of a second language to study, alluded to by Oppenheimer.

Turning now to the experiments, the first to be considered here was undertaken in a geolinguistic region bounded in the northwest by Austria, the northeast by Hungary, the southwest by Italy, and in the southeast by Bulgaria. All four countries are adjoined and linked by the fifth, the centrally located Yugoslavia. Thus, they consiitute a single continuous strip of territory which is particularly representative of all Europe in a variety of linguistic, political and cultural ways. Thus, and importantly for this language-pedagogical experiment, they represent all four major language groups of Europe, viz.:

Romance: Italy
Germanic: Austria
Slavic: Yugoslavia, Bulgaria
Finno-Ugric: Hungary

Likewise, they represent Europe's continuing political divisions in a symmetrical manner:

Western: Italy, Austria
Independent-line Communist: Yugoslavia
Warsaw Pact Members: Bulgaria, Hungary

In the case of the federally structured nation of Yugoslavia, three republics, with officially independent educational systems, Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia, participated. These correspond to three slightly variant but mutually intelligible native languages.

The experiment, conducted under the auspices of UNESCO, terminated in July 1974. It was organized by István Szerdahelyi, a Slavicist by training whose attention has turned increasingly to Esperanto and interlinguistics and who now holds a professorial appointment in Esperanto and interlinguistics at the Lorand Eötvös University, Budapest. The experiment consisted of the teaching of the interlanguage (IL) as the first non-native language of the learner, i.e., of Esperanto as a second language stricto sensu, in 36 schools (which underwent slight attrition to 32), in the five nations named, using a common textbook developed by

Szerdahelyi. The UNESCO sponsorship stems from a resolution passed at the Montevideo conference of that body in 1954 which commended the cultural value of Esperanto and placed the World Esperanto Association (UEA) in consultative status as a non-governmental organization (NGO).

The schoolchildren were drawn chiefly from the 5th or 6th grades (ages approximately 11-12 years) but in Italy as early as the 2nd or 3rd grades (ages approximately 7-8). Close to 1000 children were involved in this FLES experiment. They studied the target language for approximately 200 hours. Their competence in the language was thereafter subjected to a practical test when 85 of the participants, not selected for their academic success, drawn from five of the seven language areas involved, attended a vacation school program in the most centrally located and politically neutral participating country, Yugoslavia, at the resort of Primošten, where the organized Esperanto movement holds regular cultural and recreational events. At Primošten the students of diverse language backgrounds continued to be taught, jointly, in the IL, which is the vehicle of all communication at the vacation camp. They studied and played together in it. An international pedagogical Board of Visitors, numbering seven, observed the experiment, noting the use of the interlanguage in classroom and play settings, and conversing in Esperanto with the children.

A further such experiment, again under UNESCO sponsorship, is being conducted during the academic year 1975-76, again in a well-defined group of countries, contiguous or nearly so, in this case all members of the European Economic Community and drawn from the two main West European language families:

Romance: France, Italy (probable participant)
Romance/Germanic: Belgium, Luxembourg
Germanic: Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands, Great Britain

The principal theoretician behind this experiment is Professor Helmar Frank of the University (Gesamthochschule) of Paderborn, Germany, to whose work this paper is indebted.[6] Frank is the president of the GPI-ILUS group referred to above. Professor Frank notes that the altsprachliches Gymnasium of Paderborn, the Theodorianum, in his words "one of the oldest and richest in tradition of German schools, a fact which was not without significance for the realization of the entire project,"[7] began offering Esperanto in September 1974, as did two other local Gymnasien and three Hauptschulen, as a second or third FL, in a total of nine classes. (The first FL in that part of West Germany is English, the second French. Esperanto is permitted as an optional subject by the Ministry of Education of the Land in question, North Rhine-Westphalia.)

The experiment was developed as part of the continuing work on new instructional systems by the North Rhine-Westphalian Center for Research and Development of Objectivized Instructional and Learning Processes (FEOLL, from its German initials.) In February 1975, at the beginning of the second half of the German school year, the Center initiated

further IL teaching for several third-year school classes. Professor H. E. Piepha, professor of ESL at the University of Giessen, a member of the international advisory committee overseeing the experiment, notes, "For Gesamtschulen [comprehensive schools, in the British system] Esperanto represents the ideal basic curriculum in the language subject area, to be studied if possible in grades three or four - instead of the early start on English which has now been proven to be unproductive (unergiebig)."[8]

It is interesting to note that Italy will probably be one country participating in both experiments. Not coincidentally, it is the EEC country in which the two principal Western national languages English and French are most evenly balanced in their status in the schools. In February 1974 the Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano proposed to the other Social Democratic parties the use of the IL Esperanto as a common working language and language of correspondence.

American Experiments

Experimental classes in Esperanto are already in progress in the United States, although not under strict pedagogical supervision. Plans are now being made, however, for American college participation in experiments akin to the European initiatives described above, and with more careful development, implementation, supervision and impact research.

In the sixth grade of approximately one-third of all elementary schools in the state of Hawaii, several units in Esperanto are included in a course in communication. The schoolchildren are introduced to the concept of a second language, to the idea of language planning, language creativity, and after studying the basics of Esperanto (much of whose fundamental grammar may be presented in a rather small number of exception-free rules) they are finally encouraged to create their own "international language project." The program was developed by a trained pedagogical consultant, a grade-school teacher of Esperanto from California, at the Department of Education of the State of Hawaii, Honolulu. It should be noted that the majority of schoolchildren in Hawaii are native speakers of Hawaiian Creole English (popularly known as Pidgin, da kine talk, etc.) with strongly ambivalent attitudes to the learning and use of Standard English.[9]

Esperanto is taught at a number of grade schools and high schools in California, Oregon, Washington and other, chiefly West Coast, states. Statistics on number of courses, level, number of students, etc., are provided in annual issues of the Bulletin/Bulteno of the American Association of Teachers of Esperanto (AATE), an organization which, in marked contrast to the AATF, AATG, AATSP, etc., is organized and operated predominantly by teachers at the FLES and high school, not the college or university, level.[10] One of the most innovative courses is that of Mrs. Doris Vallon in California. Her students, like those of many of the other schools, correspond in the IL with children in other countries and participate in the round-robin known as Grajnoj en Vento ("Grains in the Wind,") a kind of cumulative newsletter passed on from school to school,

country to country, with drawings, stories, photographs, haiku and other poems, etc., all in the international language.

At the Hillsborough County Learning Center for the Gifted in Tampa, Florida, Mrs. Gizella Giguère is teaching the IL to children of high IQ. Her experiences there and those of the better Esperanto teachers on the West Coast should be of interest to the general language pedagogue. A further report on the project in San Mateo, California, can be expected in a few years time.

Proposed College Experiment

A proposal is at present being developed by the present author and others for the experimental teaching of Esperanto in a group of American colleges. This is a development stimulated both by the recent upsurge in interest in Europe, described above, and by student reaction to informal, non-credit introductions to Esperanto offered by interested faculty at a number of institutions (among them Elizabethtown College, Pennsylvania, Fort Lauderdale University, Principia College, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, the University of California at San Diego, and others). The purpose of the experiment will be to establish the suitability of Esperanto as a college subject and as a possible alternative to national languages in the linguistic training of the liberal arts student.

Since the proposal has not, as yet, been fully developed it would be premature to describe the intended methodology, plans for teacher training, instruction and impact evaluation. Certain parallels to the above-outlined European experiments are, however, foreseen. Among them is the concept of a practical experiment in immersion in an Esperanto-speaking environment subsequent to the course, in two distinct parts: among the students' peers in a camp or campus environment similar to Primošten (above), followed by ten days at the Universal Congress of Esperanto in Reykjavik, Iceland, August, 1977.

The importance of testing will be stressed in the experimental courses, and, given careful materials development and unitary teacher training, as well as the common English native language background of all or most of the students involved, more generally valid pedagogical findings should be obtained than, say in the European experiments with their many, many challenging variables of politics, national educational policy and tradition, culture, and native language.

Esperanto and Language Pedagogy

Esperanto lends itself to methodological experimentation. Several existing methodological approaches have been developed with specific language structures or linguistic facts in mind. As the teaching of Esperanto is generalized, teachers may wish to adapt their existing methodologies to it, or to develop new ones. The Yugoslav pedagogue Rakuša offers the best existing statement of past and present methodological

approaches to the instruction of Esperanto.[11] The proposed centralized teacher training session for the contemplated American controlled experiment should be of particular methodological interest.

Whichever pedagogical approach is employed, several structural features of Esperanto should be taken into account. An advantage, for example, is the general one-to-one correspondence between phone and graphic symbol in the planned language, as indeed in many languages which have in modern times acquired planned, systematically regularized orthographies (e.g. Finnish, Swahili, Turkish). Hence, writing can, if desired, be introduced from the outset. The Latin alphabet, with two diacritics, is used in Esperanto. Thus, the only significant problem for English-speaking students is potentially that of transfer from the student's native English (interference), not internal contradictions (irregularities) in the spelling of the target language. Students used to the extreme complications.

The second pedagogically significant structural feature is the logical innerer Sprachbau of Esperanto and its remarkable potential for the creation of new linguistic forms, a wide range of novel surface structures, after the internalization by the learner of a very limited number of deep structural patterns.

Without discussing all methodologies, a disadvantage of one - the traditional grammar-translation method - for the teaching of Esperanto might be mentioned. Structurally, Esperanto is far from being a regularized Neo-Latin, a simplified Pan-European, although its basic root-stock is indeed largely that which is common to many advanced European and Western or Westernized nations. It could not be otherwise, since to include roots from all the world's languages, on some kind of proportional and fully egalitarian basis, would result in a heterogeneous jumble of incompatible forms from monosyllabic and agglutinative languages, tonal and non-tonal languages, and so on ad nauseam. But beyond the level of the historical origin of the basic roots, Esperanto may be seen as an independent linguistic structure tending toward the agglutinative typological pole, and hence morphologically reminiscent of Turkish and other Uralo-Altaic languages. This has student appeal. By gradually freeing himself from the calques, dead metaphors, extended meanings, clichés and stock phrases which make up a goodly part of what has been designated Standard Average European, the student of Esperanto, concentrating on the inner resources of the language, can move beyond his native language patterns with increasingly creative results. The psychological rewards of such achievement offer a fruitful field for testing and evaluation. At the level of agglutinative compounding, the translation method becomes particularly inappropriate for Esperanto, in which there is a wealth of internal derivatives which, if translatable at all into English or another language, could only be rendered by lengthy, far-fetched paraphrases. (It may, in part, be such structural features which have led at least one natively English-speaking poet to abandon poetic work in English and turn to Esperanto instead.)[12]

One source of reward for student and teacher alike is the fact that, if grammar rules are properly presented (by whatever method), the

situation, so common in the conventional FL classroom, is relatively unlikely to arise in which the teacher is reduced to telling the student "they just don't say it that way," where the student's proposed utterance is contradicted by hard-to-explain, obscure or unparalleled rules of usage. In Esperanto, the dominant norms permit and even reward morphological creativity by the individual speaker. The successful learner can acquire the language and thereby gain equal membership in the speech-community in a way which he cannot in learning an ethnic language. In fact, the IL demands its own methodology; thus, the efforts of publishers of uniform series of pocket phrase-books and standardized handy textbooks for a multiplicity of languages generally miss the entire point of the international language if they attempt to force its internally consistent structures when they attempt to force it into the mold of other languages or to teach parrot-like fixed phrases rather than offering a step-by-step introduction into its structural principles.[13]

Gifted students appear to internalize the rules of the language with rapidity. The present writer, for example, in an informal public experiment at a meeting of the Florida Esperanto Society in Fort Lauderdale in 1973, introduced the rudiments of the grammar of the language to a group of gifted students from the Nova School of Fort Lauderdale, who had no previous knowledge of it. In roughly one half-hour they were introduced orally to the rules for the pluralization of nouns, all three basic tenses of verbs, the formation of deverbal nouns and desubstantival verbs, various patterns of agreement and subject-object interchange, etc., plus some examples of affixation such as for the specification of femininity, the formation of semantic opposites, etc. Little guided or repetitious pattern drilling and substitution drilling was necessary. In their responses the students showed a rapid perception of the structural principles of the language, with its relatively regularized phonology and morphosyntax.[14]

Such pioneer programs as those in Tampa, San Mateo, California, and Walla Walla, Washington, pose problems of follow-up and continuing teaching materials, especially as students appear likely to attain fluency in a shorter period than is likely for a national-ethnic language. As in other languages, there is the problem of bridging the gap between the experimental FLES program and the high school and college levels. Even the planned coordinated American university program, starting as it will from the first-year language level, will not necessarily serve as an appropriate continuation for those students who have already studied Esperanto at grade school or high school level. A wider variety of courses is, however, offered at San Francisco State University, where elementary, intermediate and advanced language courses as well as courses in literature and pedagogy have been offered for credit in the Summer School for five successive years, principally taught by a visiting professor flown in each year from Scotland, William Auld, who is a leading poet in the IL and author of a useful beginning text.[15] If their economic circumstances permit, San Francisco State students are encouraged to attend, as part of the course and for credit, the World Esperanto Congress held the first week of August in a different world city. This was particularly practicable in 1972 when the Congress was held in Portland, Oregon, and the official post-congress at

San Francisco State.

Since Esperanto is a non-territorial language and (like the great majority of the world's languages) a non-state language, the experience obtained by national language students living or studying in the country to which their FL is native, may for students of the IL best be paralleled by participation in Esperanto cultural events, such as congresses and meetings of various types. For American students, these should preferably be in a non-English-speaking country. These include the residential Esperanto Cultural Centers at Grésillon, France; La Sagne, Switzerland; Primošten, Yugoslavia (see above); or the Esperanto-medium Someraj Universitataj Kursoj held at the Université de Liège, Belgium. The broader question of defining and instructing Esperanto culture goes beyond the scope of the present article; readers are referred to a presentation by Tonkin[16] and, for the original literature, to a dissertation accepted by the program in Comparative Literature at Indiana University.[17]

Students who cannot travel may, like those studying any other language, correspond by letter or tape, or use radio, e.g. participating in the daily conversations of the Pacific Ocean network of Esperanto-speaking radio amateurs organized by KH6GT Wahiawa, Hawaii, with participation by hams in Japan, the U.S., Mexico and sometimes Canada, New Zealand, etc. An Esperanto class in Chihuahua, Mexico, has often participated in the network via the licensed amateur station operated by its teacher. In certain areas shortwave broadcasts in the language may be received, notably on the East Coast from Switzerland and sometimes Italy and on the West Coast from Peking.[18]

Interlanguage, Learning Theory, and Social Reform

The experimental teaching of the interlanguage (IL) poses theoretical questions of great interest. In West Germany, pedagogical attention to its possible introduction into the schools has arisen as part of the movement for the democratization of education, which is a major topic there as indeed it has been in the United States and elsewhere, although on a less rigorously formulated basis. German leaders in politics and educational philosophy have called for a reexamination of the entire societal function of schools, their organization, their management and curriculum.

It is increasingly felt there that native-language and second-language education has been a focus of elitism. One notes, for example the classification of German high schools into traditional categories of altsprachliches Gymnasium (classical) and neusprachliches Gymnasium (modern language), with all the social connotations attached thereto.

In traditional native-language courses for German children, the German followers and interpreters of Bernstein such as Överbeck and Roeder have perceived a curricular tendency to reinforce the class distinction associated with Bernstein's two codes of language, the restricted code generally used by the working class (in British and West European social terms) and the elaborated code characterizing, broadly, the linguistic usage of the middle class (which, in Britain and West Germany, is by no means as large as the

corresponding class in America, with its consensus linguistic standard shared by a majority of the population.) These educational reformers have called for active measures, especially in the elementary schools, to counteract such reinforcement of the restricted code among socially disadvantaged children. This may be done by social mixing (comprehensive schools), by individualized language arts education, and by active measures against speech and reading deficiencies at the elementary school level. Other problems include the still sharply defined social dialects in contemporary Germany, Britain and other European countries and the broken, pidginized or non-existent German of the children of Gastarbeiter from Mediterranean countries. To summarize, the call is for the abolition of elitism in the teaching of German as a mother tongue.

Foreign language learning in Europe, too, has traditionally been associated with elitism. Consider the cosmopolitan upper class of Europe in the pre-1914 period, totally fluent in French and constituting a privileged, leisured class at home in the courts, casinos and spas of Germany, Italy, Russia or any other European country. The reverse side of the coin was, of course, the alienation of these classes from their own people and language, as exemplified by the Russian aristocracy of the nineteenth century, the failure to consider linguistic factors at the formation of Belgium in 1830, the collapse of the multilingual, multi-ethnic Austro-Hungarian Empire, etc.

Upper-class elitist learning and use of French has in recent decades owing to well-known historical and political factors, been partly supplanted and partly augmented by a similar elitist study and use of English. Such elitist sttitudes, for example, dominate the United Nations, where it was widely reported that Kurt Waldheim was accepted as Secretary-General partly, perhaps largely, because of his fluency in English and French. In West German schools, the Abitur generally requires seven years' study of English and six of French. Other worthy and perhaps more challenging national languages such as Russian cannot usually be studied as part of the curriculum; they do not count toward the Abitur and must be studied after hours. (The failure to teach Russian in West German schools is a contributing factor in the division of the two German states; in the German Democratic Republic it is the first obligatory foreign language.)

Any removal, in the Federal Republic of Germany, of the specific requirements for seven years of English and six of French will naturally not be a piecemeal, arbitrary, faddish or ill-considered action akin to the relaxation or abolition of FL and/or other requirements in response to American student activism, an often hasty action whose long-term consequences are now being felt under different, and far less optimistic, socio-economic and philosophical conditions than those of the U.S. in the late 1960's. Nor is it likely that German schoolchildren, or those in other language-conscious countries of Europe, will be left without second-language training in the schools, as is now increasingly the case in the U.S.[19]

Such a change in the requirements will rather be the result of a

general democratization of education and a change in governmental policy based upon the acceptance of a new educational philosophy. Proponents of educational democratization are therefore asking, not merely what skills have been attained in FL teaching up to now, but what social goals were served by the inclusion of FL's in the curriculum, and what politico-philosophical reasons lay behind the choice of the particular FL's. It is not coincidental, for instance, that the two languages taught in West Germany are the national languages of the three Western occupying powers which entered in 1945 and still maintain rights and forces.

As in the students' native German, the two class-related codes exist in the currently obligatory English and French; indeed, it was for English that the codes were first distinguished by Bernstein. Bearing in mind the elitist nature of English and French as FL's in the continental environment and the social connotations attached to their use, it seems unlikely that their teaching could be of value expanding restricted-code users into an elaborated code. While refinements in methodology may doubtless be developed, ESL and French represent the status quo in FL teaching in Germany. Moreover, they are among the least phonemic of the languages in Europe in their orthography and among the most problematical in their structure. In their phonological assimilation of international terms (e.g. placenames, Greco-Latinate scientific and technical vocabulary) they are among the least typical and most idiosyncratic. With, for example, their comparative paucity of cardinal vowels and wealth of subtle diphthongs (English) and nasalized vowels (French) they are also among the less typical languages of Europe on a phonetic basis. Even within their respective language families, Germanic and Romance respectively, they are anomalous and atypical. To summarize, while they may be important foreign languages, they might not be considered <u>representative</u> ones.

The sound systems and conventional orthographies of English and French are of little value in teaching German or other students with reading and speech problems speech/symbol relationships and aritculatory habits of broader validity. For this reason, Latin was tried in a series of recent experiments in Hanover, being taught from the fifth grade as the first foreign language. The phonology of the classical language, with its long and short cardinal vowels, was seen as potentially helpful to those with learning difficulties in their native German. The disadvantages of Latin, however, included the complexities of its grammar and the attitudinal difficulties entailed in its association, mentioned above, with the <u>altsprachliche Gymnasien</u> and its status as a "dead" language.[20]

Attention therefore turned to Esperanto. Theoretical approaches differed, but all agreed that the phonology of the planned language was close to a hypothetical Standard Average European and that its one-to-one sound-to-grapheme correspondence could only be of value in combating learning disabilities in basic native-language skills. Ruprecht, for example, said:

> As opposed to English as first foreign language at this phase [about the third grade, REW] Esperanto would have the advantage

> that as a result of its very simple and highly phonetic orthography it functions much more favorably. . . than the highly unphonetic English.[21]

Some disunity exists among serious scholars as to the attitudinal or philosophical factors attached to the learning of Esperanto. The topic is a wide one and has been subject to decades of debate published in the language itself. Reference will be made here, however, only to a few recent studies in English or German.

As mentioned above, in a real sense Esperanto is not a "foreign" language for the prospective learner. It is not the language of another, perhaps hostile people. As Forster points out and as the present writer will further demonstrate elsewhere,[22] the language is not currently learned as a result of politico-economic constraints. Although a great deal more could be said, this viewpoint may be summarized as the neutralist or dispassionate approach, emphasizing the neutrality of Esperanto and a correspondingly neutral, non-emotive attitude to its acquisition as a second language.

An example of such a set of attitudes among leading pedagogues conducting these experiments is that of Professor Helmar Frank. Aided by his work he sees Esperanto as moving rapidly beyond the small, somewhat sectarian groups who, for example, maintained it against fierce persecution under Hitler, Stalin and other totalitarian regimes, but with a highly ambivalent attitude toward its possible general spread and eventual mass use. The English sociologist Forster, working at the University of Hull, is a pioneer in the study of the phenomenon of the overlapping Esperanto speech-community and language-promoting movement. On this point, he observes,

> Aspirations "that the movement should flourish" are far more common that aspirations that its aims should be achieved.[23]

The movement stage would, in the view of Frank, be decisively supplanted by the functional stage of the generalization of Esperanto as a second language for practical use and of the instruction of Esperanto as a propedeutic in language teaching and/or, as Frank desires, for the democratization of speech-related arts in the classroom. Forster and other sociologists would doubtless report with interest on the reaction of the Gemeinschaft members of the organized language movement, as Forster has identified them and as he will shortly be describing them in the first book-length study of the British Esperanto Association's membership, to such a decisive change in the composition of the community of second language users of the IL.[24] Forster has recently begun a year's study of the sociology of the world Esperanto movement centered on the movement's headquarters in Rotterdam, under a British Council grant.

Horst Ruprecht, the theoretician of democratized education, differs from the neutralist or dispassionate viewpoint, although there has as yet been no published debate between Ruprecht and Frank. Ruprecht sees

Esperanto as being strengthened by its ideological associations as a vehicle of linguistic understanding among the peoples of the world on the basis of a partial language compromise by each. He sees the appeal of the language in its interna ideo or philosophy of a neutral second language for all mankind, the philosophy, briefly, of the movement which has existed side-by-side with the speech community in partial congruence with it.[25] Ruprecht goes so far as to say, regarding Esperanto,

> . . . it is not only a verbal system of communication, but at the same time an attitude or partnership and informational openness which conquers nationalistic and ethnic prejudices. It is precisely the jointing together of the peoples and the dissolution of the power blocs which is part of the goals of Esperanto.[26]

To summarize the theoretical question, would the generalized teaching of Esperanto in state schools with computerized and/or cybernetic methods strengthen the Esperanto movement or render it obsolete? It would naturally greatly increase the number of second-language users of the language. How then could these be defined in terms of a speech-community? Forster's sociological definition of the interlocking language community and social movement would have to be modified or replaced. At present, Forster states:

> The fact which is crucial to the sociological understanding of Esperanto is that the speech-community of the language is a social movement.[27]

The whole issue is one of great sociological and sociolinguistic interest.

Regardless of the ideological question, Esperanto is certainly free of the ethnic associations which many educators see as partly responsible for the ghetto child's resistance to Standard English and to English literacy despite massive exposure on television and varying degrees of exposure in the classroom, on the street and elsewhere. It might, if rigorously examined, be claimed that Esperanto is not fully culturally neutral in that it represents (like most innovations of civilization and modern material culture) a rational approach to the solution of a pressing problem - the world language problem - a problem chiefly recognized by the rationalized citizen of the dominant Western and Westernized socio-politico-economic regime in the contemporary world. It is therefore unsurprising that, in Asia, Esperanto has attracted most attention in China, Japan and Korea, rathern than in, say, India or Sri Lanka.

Let us conclude this discussion of the role of Esperanto in school reform and in native-language teaching by returning briefly to Bernstein's "two codes" of language. Baldur Ragnarsson, of the Ministry of Education of Iceland, Reykjavik, an exponent of Bernstein's theories (and a citizen of the world's most literate nation!) points out that in Esperanto, just as there is little divergence between spoken language and orthographic convention, there are few signs of the existence of a restricted code.

Thus, socially and educationally disadvantaged children, by being taught that Esperanto which exists - presumably an elaborated code - might thereafter be indirectly brought to the use of the elaborated code in their native language also. The experiment should at least be tried, and the comparative sociology of Iceland and the United States leads one to think that such an experiment is more necessary in the U.S. than in that northern island.[28]

Propedeutic value

While the learning of Esperanto offers a variety of intrinsic rewards, some of which have been mentioned above, there is an additional potentiality suggested by a few existing studies and which deserves further testing and verification. This is the potential for enhanced student motivation in favor of learning further non-native languages, i.e. the ethnic-national languages more commonly taught in this country or other languages of the student's choice.

Three studies published in English, and one in French, are devoted to the teaching of Esperanto alongside or prior to ethnic languages. Their findings are not fully consonant with each other, and many variables make a direct comparison and contrast of the results difficult. The most specific claim for a propedeutic value of Esperanto instruction preceding instruction of a national language is made in an interesting, although in some ways insufficiently documented, article by the Englishman Norman Williams. Williams concludes "However, no matter how one looked at the results there was ample justification for believing that one year of Esperanto followed by one year of French on the basis of progress in French was better than two years' French without an introductory course in Esperanto."[29] This statement, while reflecting conviction on Williams' part, is somewhat vague, especially in its failure to define "progress." The term "better" sounds subjective. Perhaps the most interesting finding is that ability in General English improved most among students of Esperanto. Those who took French did not improve so much in General English, while those who were taught neither French nor Esperanto, only more English, improved even less! This finding tends to support those German Bernsteinians who see Esperanto as a useful aid in improving first-language achievement. Williams concludes by declaring his conviction that Esperanto should be studied first, other modern languages subsequently. An additional variable which deserves testing is the choice of a national language, in Williams' case French, a Romance language bearing a strong similarity to Esperanto in its basic root stock, some resemblance at the syntactic level, though less in phonetics, phonemics or orthographic principles.

In Hungary, Szerdahelyi tests the propedeutic value of Esperanto for native speakers of a Finno-Ugric language learning five major national Indo-European languages, those most commonly taught in Hungary.[30] His results are as might be expected by one familiar with the comparative structures of Esperanto and the five languages. Prior study of Esperanto will, according to Szerdahelyi, render the acquisition of Italian approximately 65% faster, followed by French, English and German in descending

order, down to Russian for which Esperanto has a propedeutic value of approximately 30%. There is a distinct similarity between the phonologies of Italian and Esperanto, and several other structural traits, e.g. the frequent (in Italian) or universal (in Esperanto) noun marker -o, are mutually supportive. Attitudinal factors, perhaps particularly in the cases of Russian and English, cannot however be excluded. The mere fact that Hungarian is historically a Finno-Ugric language does not make it fully neutral and equally foreign culturally and structurally to the other languages in question - in terms of area linguistics it is of course a Central European language and a participant, however divergent, in the common culture designated as Standard Average European.

An English-language study of Esperanto as an introduction to French preceding that of Williams is by J. H. Halloran.[31] Again, as in Williams' work, the conclusions are somewhat equivocal, although the general tone is guarded and conservative, and the statistical analysis careful. Halloran observes that Esperanto can be particularly useful with below-average students. In his 1965 article, Williams observes that prior to 1952, children learning Esperanto were generally below-average performers, those learning French average. Only in 1952 was Esperanto taught to average and above-average children. Bearing in mind the 1952 publication date of the Halloran article, it follows that the Halloran experiment was in fact conducted only on below-average children, the only ones for whom the experimenter notes the utility of Esperanto as a propedeutic.

As the European schoolchildren introduced to Esperanto in the experiments described above proceed, in the future, to study additional, national languages, further work on the question of Esperanto as a propedeutic may be expected. Also, the question of attitudinal changes toward foreign languages via preliminary exposure to Esperanto may be tested, under relatively good experimental conditions, in year-by-year follow-up of the future course and subject choices of the American students to be exposed, in the pending experiment, to Esperanto. Some work on the controlled testing of Esperanto language ability and language attitudes has now begun. A recent Dutch study used U.S. Peace Corps language proficiency and language attitude tests.[32]

Enhanced Motivation vs. Skill Transfer

The term "propedeutic" has been used above as a cover term for two possible effects. Existing studies, while not unanimous and few in number, tend to show that Esperanto training improves performance in the acquisition of another language after Esperanto. One may ask whether this is because (1) the skill of language learning, per se, can be acquired and transferred, or (2) the learning of Esperanto creates high motivation for second-language learning.

Within possibility (2) we may further distinguish two possible reasons for such motivation, or types of motivation; (2a) the internally consistent structure of Esperanto renders it easy to learn and the successful acquisition of target skills motivates the learner toward a favorable attitude to

language learning; or (2b) Esperanto, as a model second language, conveys to the learner the general principle of the legitimacy and reality of ways of thought and expression other than those of his native language.

Hypothesis (1) was that formerly claimed for Latin. Little has been heard of it in recent years. Though it has become unfashionable, it deserves renewed attention, since, if true, it is a finding of great importance for language pedagogy and for general learning theory. The time has come to initiate controlled tests of the skill-transfer hypothesis. For such tests, Esperanto is a superb testing mechanism, highly cost-effective, requiring minimal investment of time and effort, and may be easily incorporated into any language program, at any level. Its superiority in this regard to Latin is obvious, in that Esperanto is an eminently speakable language of the twentieth century, possessing the appropriate vocabulary. The training of teachers for the experimental testing of the role of Esperanto in skill transfer should, moreover, be of shorter duration than that for Latin teachers.

It is, however, entirely possible that enhanced motivation, rather than skill transfer, is the key to the language-propedeutic value of Esperanto. This too, if true, should be experimentally established. Or both factors might be present, perhaps in differing proportions. The two factors might also differ in importance for adult vs. child learners, etc.

Even the question of the ease of learning of a second language has remained an ill-defined issue. General attitudes among Esperanto speakers are that it is an "easy"language to learn. An attitudinal survey conducted by the present writer at the World Esperanto Congress in Hamburg, 1974, confirmed this prevalent attitude.[33] Not only native speakers of Indo-European languages, but also speakers of Chinese and Japanese tend to declare that they found learning it "easy". (As Esperanto has so far spread little outside the developed countries, it is impossible to obtain a statistically significant sample of Esperanto second-language speakers who are native speakers of, e.g., African or Austronesian languages.) The internal consistency of Esperanto, its phonology (e.g., the use of five cardinal vowels without phonemic distinction of length, nasality, etc.) and its consistent orthography appear to be among the principal factors contributing to its ease of acquisition. These factors should however be tested by students of language universals and by experts in linguistics, logic and other disciplines. The German phonetician Max Mangold is working in this area.[34]

It is interesting to extend the comparison with Latin, and to re-examine some of the traditional arguments for the teaching of Latin. Thus, it was claimed that Latin was a training in the enunciation of cardinal vowels, voiced and voiceless stops, and hence of "good" articulatory habits. Likewise, it provided a common stock of lexical roots which are historically basic to much of English and other European languages and which continue to be productive today, e.g., in the Linnean nomenclature and other scientific terminology. Both arguments might, in

fact, be made for Esperanto. The articulatory argument applies with greater force, since Latin phonology has traditionally been taught with considerable variations on a national, regional, personal or attitudinal basis. Esperanto, on the other hand, has a definite spoken norm, accessible in radio broadcasts, recordings, the speech of orators and other prestige speakers. The stock of recognizable roots in Esperanto, helpful in work on English etymologies and in the learning of European languages, is actually greater than in Classical Latin, since Esperanto generally uses only those Latin roots which survived into Romance. To these it adds many Germanic and some Slavic roots, chiefly those which have blended with those of Latin/Romance origin to form the common European stock. In an experiment at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 20 out of 22 students who completed an evening course in Esperanto went on to take other languages and expressed an increased interest in language generally.[35]

Use in TESOL

Esperanto is used in introductory TESOL courses, e.g. by Professors John Dennis and Robert Leopold at San Francisco State University, and it is useful as a "shock language" in general language methodology courses. For example, trainee teachers of any given FL may, for shock purposes, be placed for an hour or so in the position of their future or present students by subjection to a brief Esperanto lesson. Thanks to its regularized structure, simple instructions can be given and exercises conducted with a minimal expenditure of time.

Materials, especially for elementary-school programs, are being developed by the groups led by Szerdahelyi and Frank respectively. The East/West European experiment was conducted with a book written by Szerdahelyi, available in an all-Esperanto edition or in national editions with a national-language supplement. An elementary-school level magazine, Juna Amiko, ("Young Friend") is published in Hungary. Political content is slight. Beyond the elementary level, it may be desired to select text material from original Esperanto literature, guided by the Hagler dissertation, the comprehensive book list of the Esperanto Information Center (Address: P.O. Box 508, Burlingame, California, 94010), or the (now somewhat dated) Parsons curriculum guide cited in footnote 10. The Paderborn, Germany, group is specifically committed to computer-assisted instruction, and is working with computer and software manufacturers, specifically the ELFE-Lehrgerätebau, Berlin, and Eurolehrtechni, Berlin and Paris. Computer program development for the courses is proceeding at Paderborn and Münster, and some work in computer translation using Esperanto as a bridge language or otherwise has been conducted at the University of Saarbrücken and, in the United States, at Brigham Young University. Exploratory development of Esperanto courseware has also begun recently at the Computer-Based Research Laboratory, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, home of the PLATO project.

Several American bodies seem equipped to establish, implement further experimental programs akin to those described above. In view of the

present weakness, mentioned above, of the American Association of Teachers of Esperanto at the university level and consequently at the level of pedagogical research, more appropriate forums would include the Modern Language Association, at whose annual meetings successful seminars on Esperanto Language and Literature have been held for the past three years. The last two years at the MLA annual meeting have also seen an additional seminar in the broader topic of Interlinguistics - the study of planned international languages and their speakers - and in 1974 the MLA section in Applied Linguistics included a paper based largely upon examples from Esperanto.[36] Another body which could sponsor such experiments is the Esperanto Studies Association, recently founded by Humphrey Tonkin of the University of Pennsylvania, E. James Lieberman, M.D., of Washington, D.C., and the present writer. ACTFL and the societies devoted to Uncommonly-Taught Languages are other possible sponsors.

Conclusion

To conclude, then, the interlanguage Esperanto may offer much of pedagogical and linguistic interest both in its own right and/or as an adjunct or preliminary to other language instruction. It seems particularly suited to the cost-effective testing of language-pedagogical theory and methods. Beyond its purely linguistic impact, Esperanto may also be a convenient catalyst for the teaching of international studies and communication, as a test case in the planning which has hitherto appeared to resist rationalization, and for multinational cooperation in curriculum development.[37]

NOTES

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